

13. GREYWINGED BLACKBIRD *TURDUS BOULBOUL*
(LATHAM) AT BHARATPUR, RAJASTHAN

We saw a male Greywinged Blackbird in the Ghana Bird Sanctuary, Bharatpur (27° 13'N., 77° 32'E.) in the afternoon of 25 February 1968. The bird, which settled on a low tree, was not shy and could be approached as near as 25 feet. Its black plumage with prominent grey patch running from part of the wing coverts to the inner secondaries, and the finely barred abdomen, together with reddish orange bill and yellow eye lids leave no doubt as to its identity. It was seen on three successive days in the same area.

This species has not been recorded south of the Punjab Salt Range where it is noted as 'occasionally straggling in winter' by Ripley (1961).

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
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REFERENCE

RIPLY, S. D. (1961) : A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan : 532, Bombay Natural History Society, Bombay.

14. THE GREEN ALGA, *SPIROGYRA* SP. IN THE DIET
OF THE WHITEBACKED MUNIA, *LONCHURA*
STRIATA (LINN.)

On the morning of 9-IX-1967, while crossing a rice field in process of conversion into a housing site in the eastern outskirts of Ernakulam, my path lay over uneven ground thrown into a series of hollows and depressions which were filled up during the recent rains. As I neared one of them in which the water had nearly dried up, a small party of white-backed munias suddenly flew down from their perch on the nearest telegraph wire and were seen to peck at the green algae which had formed on its exposed moist bed. From where I stood hardly 6 feet away, I could clearly see a green strand of the alga in the beak of the bird nearest to me, slowly being swallowed. The other birds hopped about on the sandy bottom, pecking at the green mass and seemingly enjoying themselves. However, before I could continue with my observation, the sound of approaching footsteps disturbed the birds and sent them scurrying from their meal.

The green alga struck me as rather an unusual item in the diet of this munia, which along with others of its tribe, is known to feed chiefly on seeds and grains. Whether or not this choice of food is commoner than